



Control Number: 50664



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Heading For New Horizons

Public Utility Commission of Texas
1701 N. Congress Avenue
Austin, Texas 78701

2020 APR 14 AM 10:39

April 09, 2020

RE: Project No. 50664 , *Issues Related to the State of Disaster for Coronavirus Disease 2019*

South Plains Telephone Cooperative, Inc, and its affiliates, collectively, ("SPTC") files this letter to inform the Commission of our company's initiatives as it relates to the COVID-19 pandemic. SPTC is a small rural telco providing service in the panhandle South Plains area of Texas. SPTC recognizes the unprecedented nature of this situation and greatly appreciates the State and Commission's efforts to monitor and provide guidance on the many issues that surround this pandemic.

As we are grateful for our health-care providers and the guidance of our federal, state and local leaders at this time, we are monitoring the situation closely and are providing assistance where possible. As such our company recognizes the importance of communications services during times such as these, and is doing everything we can to make sure Texans remain "connected" during these trying times.

The communications services provided by SPTC and other rural telecommunications providers allow for the social distancing that is being called for to flatten the curve of this Pandemic. We are working diligently to provide the services that allow for remote access for employees, remote learning opportunities, access to telemedicine and access to e-commerce and other vital communications enabled tools.

During this time, SPTC, has taken the following steps to assist its customers and community:

- SPTC has initiated its Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)
- SPTC has signed onto the Federal Communication Commission ("FCC")'s "Keep American's Connected" pledge. As a part of this pledge, for the next 60 days:
 - SPTC will not terminate service to any residential or small business customers because of their inability to pay their bills due to the disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic;

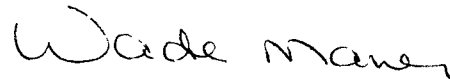
- SPTC will waive any late fees that any residential or small business customers incur because of their inability to pay their bills due to the disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic; and
- SPTC will open its Wi-Fi hotspots to any American who needs them.
- In addition to items in the pledge SPTC has taken the following actions specifically within its community:
 - Provide, at no charge, and where facilities exist, until May 31st, a 30x30 symmetrical broadband connection to any student within our regulated service area who's family does not currently subscribe to broadband.
 - Increase, at no charge until May 31st, subscribers to the next level broadband tier when the tier they subscribe to is not sufficient.
- While SPTC is working hard to maintain service, screening will be done before installation or trouble house calls. All technicians will be trained regarding the use of masks, sanitizers and wipes.

SPTC will continue to monitor developments in this emergency situation to assist our communities, state and nation. As well as our actions to maintain the critical communications network and services we provide, SPTC is contributing to the social distancing initiative by encouraging certain employees to work from home, limiting employee interactions with customers, encouraging online or drive through bill pay, and other recommended actions.

SPTC will continue to monitor developments and recommendations from the CDC, WHO, and other Federal and State entities. We are constantly communicating internally to adapt our plan to protect our employees, our customers, and maintain these critical services during this time.

Please contact us at 806-763-2301 or wade.maner@sptc.net should you have any questions or concerns.

Yours Truly,



Wade Maner

CEO/GM

South Plains Telephone Cooperative, Inc.